

News From  
**SENATOR LINCOLN CHAFEE**  
**RHODE ISLAND**



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**CHAFEE SECURES \$5 MILLION FOR REMOVAL  
OF THE OLD JAMESTOWN BRIDGE**

**WASHINGTON, DC** – U.S. Senator Lincoln Chafee today announced that he has secured \$5 million for the removal of the old Jamestown Bridge. The funding is included in the conference report on the FY 2004 Transportation, Treasury and General Government Appropriations bill. The final measure must be approved by Congress and signed by the President.

“This has been a major priority for me,” said Senator Chafee, “and I am pleased that by working with my colleagues, Senators Shelby and McConnell, I have secured these important funds to benefit Rhode Island and all who visit our beautiful state.”

On June 11, 2003, Senator Chafee wrote to the Honorable Richard Shelby, chairman of the Subcommittee on Transportation, Treasury and General Government Senate Appropriations Committee, to request that the committee consider this a priority request.

Senator Chafee held a press conference on July 8, 2002 and pledged to seek federal funds for removal of the span – characterized by the US. Coast Guard as posing a severe navigational and safety hazard. “For aesthetic as well as safety reasons, removal of the old Jamestown Bridge is an important piece of unfinished business,” said Chafee. “As long as the old bridge remains standing, it will continue to deteriorate and become even more of a hazard to boaters, shippers, and those who live near the structure.”

Originally opened to traffic in 1940, the Jamestown Bridge was rendered structurally and functionally obsolete by the State of Rhode Island through a bridge inventory program in 1970. As a contingency for Coast Guard permit approval of the new Jamestown-Verrazzano Bridge – completed in 1992 – removal of the former bridge was required. That project was delayed due to limited funding for bridge and road construction throughout Rhode Island. The old bridge is currently in a degraded condition, and the Coast Guard had threatened the State with penalties if it is not removed.

**(more)**

The Rhode Island Transportation Advisory Committee has recognized that the project must be a priority for the receipt of transportation funding by 2004. Estimated to cost approximately \$7.6 million, the bridge removal project has the strong support of the State of Rhode Island and the Towns of Jamestown and North Kingstown. Currently, the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT), through an ongoing Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), favors a plan that calls for demolishing the old Jamestown Bridge, and depositing the associated debris through land filing and the creation of artificial reefs. The SEIS complements the Jamestown Bridge Environmental Impact Statement completed in May 1981.